



NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

# ECE 121



**Child Development**  
**Module 4**

# **ECE 121 (Child Development) Module 4**

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# Unit I School Readiness I

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## 1.0 Introduction

In the last unit you learnt about the characteristics of the gifted child. Intelligence and creativity are terms used to describe giftedness in child. A gifted child you were told is the child who is exceptionally brilliant among his mates and show some special qualities. There are some characteristic behaviour of gifted children, we stated most of these and ways by which gifted children can be helped in the classroom situation.

In this unit and the next one we shall be considering another characteristic of young children, and that is school readiness. As the child reaches age two, he has developed motor and language skills to some extent. Going by his body make up, he is socially and emotionally ready for early childhood education, at least the pre-primary level, where he can learn to control his feeling among his age groups. Some schools do not want to accept children of this age; they believe that they are too young to cope with them since they are not used natured.

Such children can be put in the preparatory or play group class. At times teachers find out that a child is unable to perform some tasks at a particular age, but will be able to perform the task at later age without teaching. A clear example may be a child who cannot read simple words at age seven or a child who cannot solve a simple arithmetic sum, but who in later age is able to do these tasks. The inability to read or solve some arithmetic before may not be because of inexperience but because of immaturity.

In this unit, and the next we shall talk about maturation and how to make a child ready for formal school system. In this unit, we shall be introduced to the topic – school Readiness, since the topic will extend to the next unit as well. We are going to highlight how children can be prepared to go to formal school. The steps to be taken so as to get ready for school will also be stated. The criteria for determining that a child is ready for school is also included along with steps to take to draw up programmes to promote school readiness in children.

## 2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- list steps to be taken to make a child ready for school
- discuss the criteria for school readiness
- draw up a programme that t can be used to promote school readiness.

## 3.0 Main Content

### 3.1 Preparing Children to go the Formal School from Pre-Primary School

The first day at school is something frightening for most children. Even if a child has attended a nursery school, entering a regular primary school is totally a new experience. The child leaves the home environment with which he is more familiar. He is likely to spend longer period at school. He will meet with few more children in his class; and try to find a place for himself among them. He will have to cope with for different kinds of attitudes than he had ever experienced. He needs to trust his teachers to understand him and keep him safe through these new experiences.

### 3.2 Readiness for School

Erickson has suggested that the basic tasks in personality development in early childhood are the development of a sense of trust, a sense of autonomy (self-government and sense of initiative).

This kind of feeling arises out of the way a child's basic needs are met; his experiences, (with feeding, with toileting, etc.) the kind of experiences he gets from other people. It is out of all these early experiences that the child builds a feeling of trust. Once he learns to trust others, he also learns to have confidence and trust in himself. The attitude (feelings) of parents are therefore, quite important in building such confidence, because they are the initial and primary set of people he depends upon to satisfy his basic needs.

For a child going to school for the first time, there are two basic tasks. First he must go and meet a new experience which will help his growth; but which is also uncertain.

Second, he must resolve the conflict of leaving one thing for another. This means leaving the comfort and certainty of his parents being there for him, and having to now depend on others, who are less known to him. Somehow this means leaving to depend on himself, rather than others certainly children will respond differently to such situation. But whatever may be the reactions of the child, there is the need for some measures of assurance. Read an expert in child study suggests five ways by which both child and parent(s) may be helped.

#### Meeting with the parent(s)

This is a pre-school meeting in which the parents or one of the parents discusses with the teacher the policies of the school, fees, health regulations and the process of admission. The teacher also answers questions which parents may need to ask.

The essence of the meeting is to help the child's parent(s) to have a clear understanding of what their child is likely to meet at school

#### Visiting the School

The child needs to have a picture of what the school looks like. A very good way of doing this is to pay a visit to the school during a non-school period; may be over a weekend or a school holiday.

During such a visit that could be arranged for a time when the teacher is around the school premises will help the child to acquaint himself with school environment. This could be the week proceeding resumption, or just when the school goes on recess, when teachers are available either to round off school activities or preparing for the new school session.

The visit is beneficial to the child in a number of ways.

- It protects him from the unpredicted attitudes of other children
- He enters, into some relationship with the teacher, enjoying his/her personal attention.
- He becomes familiar with the physical set up of the school. For example he knows where the toilet is located and other facilities too.
- The teacher learns something about the child; which helps him to understand the child's needs.

### **Visiting the School in Session**

His visit to the school could be repeated during the regular session of the school for a brief period. The child has an opportunity to form a concept of the school, and can make some contract. He may even wish to participate in some of the activities, or at least watch what is going on.

### **Attending School for part of the Session**

The child begins attending school regularly for part of the day/session. This begins the process of separating from the parent. The teacher could plan with the parents the time and method of separation. The teacher may also visit the child at home to be better acquainted.

### **Parent/Teacher Attitude toward separation**

The way parents respond to the child's going to school has profound influence on the way the child adjusts there. Parents should not be too anxious about their wards; rather they must encourage them. For instance, the mother helps a timid child by assuring her ; "I am around"; " I will not leave" she sits where the child could see her.

The teacher needs to take active part in the process of separation. He must actively give support to the child.

### **Full Attendance without Parents**

When the mother is able to leave the child almost as soon as they arrive at school, and stays away without his becoming uneasy the child is fully ready for school.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise I**

Discuss ways to which a child may be helped when he is preparing to go to school for the first time.

### 3.3 Criteria for Determining School Readiness

A number of factors may determine school readiness. Some of these factors are emotional, social, physical, cognitive and normative.

#### Physical

A child's physical well-being contributes to his school readiness. A child who has problem of vision for instance, and who is unable to adapt to the chalkboard. He may have problems adjusting from a far, some may also have hearing impairment, in which case, they may not be able to discriminate between sounds. Leper and some others who studied some children suggest that children up to the age of five hear many sounds, but thereafter, "there are wide differences in their experiences with sounds and their awareness of sounds".

The pre-school (or kindergarten) teacher must therefore be alert to such problems, and help the pupil make necessary adjustment. The state of health of a child and the quality of food he takes also affects readiness for school. A child who falls sick often and misses a lot of classes, may not be able to cope adequately with school work.

#### Cognitive

Read (recall that this had been mentioned this name in 3.2 of this unit) believe that intelligence is not a single entity. It is made up of many varieties, and this emerges as they are nurtured by a conducive environment. The pre-school child, who is at the 'pre-operational' stage of Piaget's intellectual development can therefore benefit greatly from good nursery school. The school programme exposes him to sensory-motor activities that widens and broadens his range of experience

The child improves his language competence, through dialogue. This also helps him to articulate his thoughts in words. Further, the child moves closer to clarity because it is possible for him to clarify his misconceptions. The child is able to use his imaginations, and so can think about alternatives.

#### Social-emotional

If children are to be happy then they must grow in an atmosphere devoid of emotional and behavioural problems. As earlier said, in the beginning of section 3.2 of this unit, there is a call for three things; the development of a sense of trust, autonomy and initiative.

From infancy the child must grow in an atmosphere of consistent and sensitive care. This means that the child's basic needs are met, and he get attention from people around him, he ultimately builds a sense of trust in people. Since by experience he has learned to trust people, he gains some confidence in himself; and so begins to act more confidently. If his earlier experiences had been negative he loses confidence in people and in himself too.

### Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Outline the criteria for school readiness.

### **3.4 Drawing up a Programme that can be used to Promote School Readiness**

Recent studies have called for a number of changes in the learning progress that takes place in early childhood. The new trend seeks with the “tasks” that the child needs to master if he is to make normal programmes. Two forces that determine these tasks are:

- the expectations and pressure of society
- and the changes that occurs in the child as a result of growth and maturation.

Leeper and his group (see 3.3 of this unit) identify the development tasks that exist in early childhood. There are about seven of these.

#### **Achieving an appropriate dependence - independence pattern**

At this stage the child learns to act on his own; but at the same time he needs to learn to share the teachers’ attention with other children.

- To help the child, the school has to ensure, a warm and conceptive atmosphere in group. In order to ensure this the group should be small so that the teacher can give adequate attention.
- Provide facilities like toilet, resource rooms, big playing ground etc.

#### **Achieving an appropriate giving-receiving pattern of affection**

This is the stage when the child learns to give as much love and attention as he also receives. He makes friend with other children The school provides occasion to show affection in desirable ways – greetings, playing together in groups. It is not ideal to compare children at this stage by a stressing the weakness or strengths of each of them in a manner that may lead to hard feelings of others. Each child must experience a sense of security.

#### **Relating to changing social groups**

The child at this stage learns to adjust to group rules. He must develop that sense of belonging; seeing himself for example as member of the school (group)

The school may help in the following ways:

- the child begins to participate in planning and sharing.
- emphasis is placed on co-operative and voluntary effort not on domination.
- opportunities should be created for him to give and receive helpful suggestions; and/ or criticisms as the case may be.

#### **Developing a conscience**

This is the period when the child learns to identify with societal values. He learns to take instructions, he learns to obey people in authority; he learns to accept standard behaviours.



The School assists the child by:

- giving explanations or reasons for actions; which the child should be able to understand.
- avoid moralizing.
- opportunities should be provided for making choices within limits.
- Providing opportunities to react/respond to directions or to learn respect for authority.

### **Learning ones psycho-sociobiological sex role**

Between age 2 and 4 children exchange roles freely. But after age four they begin to identify with their appropriate sex group. Boys tend to move closer to their father, and later with men, generally. Girls do similar with mother and women generally. Children at this stage begin to learn socially approved sex role.

The school helps at this stage by:

- providing for plays that allow girls to feature as mothers , a nurse while the boys can act as fathers, policemen etc.
- opportunities are provided for the children to find out the appropriate expectations from these sex roles.

### **Accepting and adjusting to a changing body**

The school should help children to adjust these physical changes of their bodies.

Boys need facilities that will help develop their muscles. Thus games like football, and adequate playing grounds should be provided.

### **Developing an appropriate symbol system and conceptual abilities**

The school helps the child at this stage by exposing him through stories, books excursions to nearby institutions or places of interest.

What this means simply is that the teacher in planning his/her programmes should take into consideration the various needs of the pupils. Just as a child differs, even so does the group.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise 3**

Draw up a programme that can be used to prepare children from preprimary school for formal educational tasks of primary school.

## **4.0 Conclusion**

School readiness is the total state of the child that shows that the child can benefit from formal education. A child needs to be helped by both the teacher and the parent (s) to get him ready for school. A child is not ready for school just because he is smart or intelligent,

other developmental process in the child must also be ready for the child's new endeavor and experience.

## 5.0 Summary

In this unit, we have just been introduced to school readiness in children. How to prepare a child for school, the role of the teacher and that of the parent is clear in what we have learnt. The criteria for determining whether or not a child is ready for school has also been stated. In the next unit, we shall continue our discussion on school readiness in more detail. We shall compare school readiness with school maturity and also highlight on the skills a child need to acquire to get ready for formal school learning.

## 6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. For a child to go to school for the first time, he has two basic tasks to overcome, and these are:
2. Discuss ways by which a child may be helped to prepare to go to school for the first time.

## 7.0 References/Further Reading

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## Unit 2 School Readiness II

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### 1.0 Introduction

School readiness, is the central theme of this course - child development. This is because we are interested in child development so as to utilize the natural principles and pattern of development in children to know what to teach them at the various stages of their life. Children don't have to be forced to do what they are not matured enough to learn or what they are not ready for. Because of the central role of school readiness in child development as regards to early childhood education, this unit will still be devoted to more discussion on school readiness. In the unit you learnt some of the steps to be taken by parents and even teachers to prepare children for formal- school work. The criteria to Identify children that are ready for formal school work will also be highlighted.

### 2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define maturation
- identify the difference between learning and maturation
- list some of the factors that can help a child to mature for school tasks on time
- recognize some of the basic training to give a child to prepare him to read and write
- recognize some of the curricular activities for the different age range of children in the pre-primary and lower primary classes
- explain the difference between maturity and readiness.

### 3.0 Main Content

#### 3.1 Maturation and Learning

Maturation is the development which takes place in an individual in the absence of specific experience (i.e. without being taught). When we narrow down growth as a biological process to that of the growth of these parts of the body that have to do with learning, then we are talking of maturational factors.

From the experience gathered in child study projects, it is somehow a waste of time teaching a baby to walk, climb or use the potty until when some physical parts of the baby's body are developed for such activities. This is what is meant by maturation. Maturation has to do with organic (thing of the living things) factors that we have little or no influence (control) over, and yet it affects our development, but we have much control on what we learn.

Maturation also has limit to some extent but learning has no limit, you can decide to learn to any extent you may choose. Maturation and Learning are two related concepts that affect

people's behaviour. It is however possible to recognize the effect of one against that of the other.

## **Self-Assessment Exercise 1**

1. What is maturation?
2. We have control over maturation. True or False?

### **3.1.1 Influence of Maturation on Children's Educational Achievement**

Many motor activities (see unit 5) are greatly affected by maturation. You will recollect that development was also described in unit three of this course and most of the units in module two as maturity (development). Many of the motor activities learned by children are effect of maturation, body co-ordination, sitting, standing, stair- climbing, cutting with scissors, buttoning clothes, walking etc. But in the case of more complex skills or tasks like rolling ball, dancing, writing, practice and training assume a more important role, whereby children are not left alone to maturation else they will be at disadvantage.

There is no universally accepted age for a child to be matured for many of the educational tasks. However from experiences and some reports of child study, it has been concluded that working of simple addition exercises with sums (totals) greater than ten should be given to children with minimum age of seven years while reading should commence with a minimum age of six years. Although it has also been proved that some children can be made to be ready for arithmetic and reading before the age of seven and six respectively based on some factors. Some of these factors are previous teaming experience, motivation, quality of school teaching, pupil- teacher relationship and intelligence of the child.

## **Self-Assessment Exercise 2**

1. Give 3 examples of activities children perform as:
  - result of maturity
  - with some training.

### **3.2 School Readiness**

It is one of the teachers task to observe children so as to detect signs of maturity i.e. growing points in them. This is usually detected through the children's spontaneous reaction and expression of felt interests.

It is not easy to notice or identify the child's first flicker (unsteady sign of movement) of new intellectual or emotional awareness, first readiness to embrace new sets of concepts or to enter to new relations. The teacher will have to act as gardener while the pupil is the plant, the school then becomes the garden.

In this way, the teacher will then be watchful of his plant, ready to feed for growth, ready to weed it when necessary, trying hard to see to it that each child is helped to grow as much as he can. The gardener should not hurry himself to make all the plants the same but to see

to it that every plant grows well so that the whole garden is in peace and harmony. The teacher can ensure the proper growth of every child by doing the following:

- Provision of a stimulating environment i.e. not trying to force any child to go against his pace, but just providing stimulation and closely observing them. The stimulation here implies the kind of learning activities and experience rather than facts to be memorized or stored. As much as possible the teacher should provide audio-visual aids, picture, illustrative books, visits to places of interests etc. These are in form of structured (i.e. planned or deliberate) environment which then becomes stimulating environment. The school physical structures are also part of the environment that must also be stimulating.
- Readiness to observe signs of readiness: the teacher must be on the lookout for maturation or growing point in the children through the appearance of interest. To observe signs of interest in children; you don't just wait passively for the child to show it, you also stimulate it. For example, to prepare a child for reading you read stories to them, though at age below five, children supposed to play most of the time, but we still find some who come to school with higher expectations, this is why there must still be some simple reading materials. Some learning theorist, we mean those who formulate theory in learning believe that learning readiness should appear more in children when they are between the age of five and eight.
- Feeding and guiding further growth of the interest: the teacher gives the child more challenging work after noting the appearance of interest in an area, he gives more guidance to the child and put him in the right direction. In all ways possible you sustain the interest, so that it even grows stronger especially during the period that the child himself is very interested. But the danger in this is that if the teacher is to teach what the students are interested alone he can easily forget the order of learning. The teacher needs to be able to balance between the two.

Reading, writing and some simple arithmetic are the three learning structures that children are usually prepare for: while we look forward to observe signs of readiness for formal school work. In the next section, we shall talk about preparing a child to read and write, later in the unit we talk about arithmetic readiness.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise 3**

- List the 3 steps to take while preparing children for formal school works.

#### **3.2.1 Reading as Part of School Readiness**

We are in a reading world and one of the qualities demanded to live comfortably is the ability to read. Children therefore, need to be ready for school by being ready to read. A child who cannot read becomes backward in almost everything in school. It should therefore be a great concern for the nursery (pre-primary) and lower primary teacher to prepare a child to read because of the great influence this will have on the child's growth.

The ability to read promotes normal mental health, growth and development in the child, and success in future. After speech (language) reading is the next major means of communication. Unfortunately unlike speech, it is not acquired naturally; It is taught and learnt by majority of people. The earlier it is taught to children the better for them to live

fuller and richer lives in the modern living world. You know will have opportunity to read things.

The age at which a child can be ready to read depends on:

- his intelligence
- how far the home environment encourages him to read
- how well he can speak and understand his own language.

The power of words, concepts and experience (total oral language background) you will recall that in Unit 5 we said children acquire vocabulary of words in the process of speech and language development the child needs to draw inspiration for recognizing words from the part of words he has gathered.

For reading and writing readiness, a child should be given training on

- Visual skills
- Auditory skills
- Oral-language development
- Emotional factors.

For now, we will briefly talk about the visual skills and make some clarification of the auditory skills. The other developmental processes have been taken care of in units 5 and 8 respectively.

### **3.2.1.1 Visual Skills**

These include:

- Hand -eye co-ordination
- Left -right eye movement
- Visual memory and imaging
- Hand -eye co-ordination.

Reading is usually taught along with writing. They are sister skills, which reinforce each other. Skill in visual discrimination is not enough without producing writing. The child needs to co-ordinate the hand and eye effectively. He sees with the eye and writes with the hand.

For reading and writing the hand and eye must work together. As we mentioned in unit 6 – Motor development, before the age of formal school period, the child is used to some body movement. But as he now begins to read and write, he needs to make more fine movement, i.e. definite, systematic movement. If the child is not well guided, he will complain of sore

shoulder after a time. It will take some time with a lot of practices before the child can make the finely controlled movements with fingers and wrists.

For some children, the training may not be for long, depending on the kind of home training received from other similar activities. For example, a girl who has been taught by her mother to do simple sewing, knitting, cutting with scissors etc. would have had some useful manipulative experiences before coming to school. Similar a boy who has been used to using screws, nuts and bolts while working with daddy. A child who has not been exposed to some of these pre-school manipulative experiences will rely heavily on the school enrichment programme before he can achieve competence in hand-eye co-ordination.

### **Left -right eye movement**

You know reading and writing normally goes from left to right. It is necessary to prepare a child to read by teaching him how to make smooth and rhythmical eye movements in a left to right direction and to move eye backward at the end of every line. A child that is not put through to things like this may be confused and make no sense of the order or direction of words in printed page.

A four year old child trying to copy with adult writing on a page of book or a paper may just readily start from right to left, start writing gaily from the bottom and work himself to the top. A left handed child is more prone to that writing in a right to left direction, who will blame him?, to him that may be the best way to write without having his other hand disturbing him.

The 'path' technique is a good way of teaching children to practice the left to right eye movement. The child can be asked to trace the route (or path) followed by a bird to his nest, a train from tunnel to a station. Pictures and stories can also be useful.

### **Training of visual memory and imaging**

Teachers should be prepared to face frustrating experience of teaching children new words every day. This has to be done with a lot of repetition, use of flash cards, work books, and other teacher devised activities, like tracing, coping etc. children who are not ready for formal reading can easily be detected. You find such children recognizing words in flash cards but not in other textual print material like book.

A lot of pre-reading exercises must be given to a child so that he can develop to the fullest of the abilities required to make a good start in learning to read.

### **3.2.1.2 Auditory Skills**

Training in auditory skills is also necessary for reading readiness. You should realize that reading involves decoding, translating visually perceived symbols into sound, so for every skill to be developed for reading, a matching auditory skill should also be considered. A beginner first read loud to himself, it is only when he hears himself well that he can prove that he can read to others.

You would have noticed that we always tell children names of objects, they themselves are always eager to know names of objects, and they try to pronounce it after the adult. The child is first taught to listen to words, notice the sound patterns, the similarity and the

differences. He relies much on the three R's listening. These are repetition, rhythm and rhyme. A lot of repetition, not only of word, but also of phrases will help the child a lot.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise 4**

Mention four basic training you will need to give a child to prepare him for reading and writing skill.

## **3.3 Preparing for Formal Learning**

The general activities, often found in kindergarten curricular (though vary from school to school and from place, to place) usually place emphasis on the pre-academic training i.e. specific academic readiness building. About 40 -50% of a typical day is devoted to specific creative activities like art work, model building etc., to music like singing, listening and rhythmic activities and also language based activities like storytelling, poetry, show and tell question and answer activities (this is like group discussion in children's own way).

The remaining time of about 50-60% of the day is flexibility distributed for self-care, (eating, toileting etc.), free play and rest periods. The flexibility in the kindergarten curriculum enables a good teacher to put in some activities of basic language, mathematics, sciences and social studies concepts. This is where the commitment, genuity, creativeness and initiative qualities of the teacher come to plays.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise 5**

Suggest activities for the day in a nursery 2 class.

#### **3.3.1 Curriculum Adaptation for Different Age Levels towards School Readiness**

The following are some activities that pre-primary and lower primary school children can do to prepare them for full and proper formal learning, at the different age levels.

##### **2- 3 years**

At this age children can do a lot of activities like drawing and painting that will benefit their motor development, and exploration with colour and paints. Most of the materials to be used must however be water soluble so they can be washed off easily without the children messing their clothes.

If a child does not want to participate, may be because it is messy or otherwise the teacher doesn't need to force him, he can however be encouraged to watch others as they do the activities.

##### **3-4 years**

This is the founding stage of children educational career. They have great interest and readiness for language vocabulary, use of sentences, capacity to enjoy books, puppets, stories and music. They are active and enthusiastic. The teacher helps them by providing rich experiences for them by asking them purposeful questions.



## **4 -5 years**

This is the period of children's steady physical growth, so they enjoy activities involving the use of the muscles e.g. jumping, running, throwing of balls etc. Pictures can be used to stimulate their interest on any topic to be taught. The teacher should ask stimulating questions from the picture.

They are in form of "reading readiness". Games involving matching of objects, letters and simple words should be provided for them. These will provide them with concentrated skills, the type needed to prepare them for effective reading in books and or charts. The more enthusiastic the teacher is in this case the more responsive the children are. Cooking, preparing salads, measuring ingredients etc. expose children and prepare them for mathematics and scientific experiences.

They can do simple classification in this age, with objects like buttons, crayons, pencils etc. They should only be introduced to materials that are safe to handle e.g. leaves, flower, water etc.

Children in this age group demands to have concrete and manipulative experiences of nature. They need to feel, sense, touch, push and pull objects of different characteristics. The period coincides with the piaget's pre-operational stage (see unit 9), they need first hand experiences of things, those things they have been seeing in pictures or books before now, they want to see them in reality; for example a child of this age needs to make an object with clay before knowing what is clay.

Teachers need to use all the things at their disposal to help the children learn. The appropriate and proportional amounts of activities to engage in will be determined by the teacher's experiences and orientation.

## **6-8 years**

The language development has improved to a great extent (see unit 5). The children in this age group are able to perform many physical tasks than before. They continue to learn best by participating in skill development rather than being told. They can cope with wide varieties of experiences and can accommodate different learning styles. Home influence can seriously affect their learning in this stage. Teachers need to be interested and show understanding to the students, and should also create and encourage the love of learning into the children.

The maturational readiness of a child is considered within the developmental pattern, where education is geared towards assisting the child in the understanding of himself and his world. It has been recognized that children have self-regulatory process of learning and growth, it is this awareness that has made education to encourage self-selection, self pacing for children's educational activities.

The pre-primary school curricula are mostly highly associated with number concepts and reading readiness activities. The "exposure to experience" technique rather than structural methods are often needed for science and social studies Children have to be exposed to relevant experience if you want them to understand social studies and science. Health and physical education along with are usually frequent in their curriculum while language, art, music and reading hardly come up.

## Self-Assessment Exercise 6

1. Suggest one activity in each case that can be relevant to children of the given age grade, which will also prepare them appropriately for their future educational tasks.(a) 2-3 years (b) 3-4 years (c) 5-6 years and (d) 6-8 years.

## 4.0 Conclusion

School readiness and school maturation are closely connected to Child Development. As the child is going through stages of development in his system, physical, social, emotional and intellectual, he is also attaining the stage of maturation for some specific school activities. The organic system in the body must be matured to some certain stages before a child can perform some specific tasks. Some of these tasks, the child grows to perform them well without teaching while for some he will need to be taught and also have a lot of practices before we can really say "that the child is prepared for the intellectually tasking activities in the formal school system, specifically primary schools.

## 5.0 Summary

In this unit, we have learnt that the fact that some children may be slow or weak. The child may not be matured enough for such tasks. We compare maturation with learning briefly while mentioning the influence of maturation in the children's educational achievement. We consider school readiness, and how we can nurture school readiness in children. The different skills to prepare a child or the purpose of being able to read and write were considered. The relevant school activities (curricular) that can be used to prepare children for formal learning were also considered at the various age range. In the next unit, our discussion will be focused on Discipline as part of Education. We shall mention the need for disciplinary actions on children. Describe what discipline entails and that the values of discipline. You will also learn that some factors influence discipline and that there are different disciplinary styles. Discipline will also be related to punishment. You are expected to see training of a child to be self-discipline as part of child development.

## 6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Explain the difference between the concepts of school readiness and school maturity.
2. Maturation and -----both affect human life by causing-----.
3. The age at which a child gets ready for reading depends on .....

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## Unit 3 Discipline as Part of Education

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### 1.0 Introduction

In the last unit, we elaborated on school readiness as a developmental process in young children. We discussed the process of getting children ready for school, school maturity and the types of curriculum that can be used to prepare a child for formal schooling proper, in this unit; we are going to discuss discipline as part of the act of education. Discipline we will come to realize, is not just keeping and maintaining law and order, remaining or quiet and still. Discipline is a developmental process, a kind of behaviour to develop in Young Children. The different terms of disciplinary styles of teachers are also stated and described. You will also learn when and how to use punishment as a resort to maintaining discipline.

### 2.0 Objectives

At the end of the unit, you will be able to:

- state the need for disciplinary actions on children
- define discipline
- describe what discipline entails
- list the values of discipline
- describe how to impose discipline on children
- list the factors that can influence discipline
- identify the different forms of discipline
- appreciate the most effective disciplinary style
- relate punishment to discipline
- define punishment.

### 3.0 Main Content

#### 3.1 Discipline as Part of the Act of Education

Since the beginning of this course we have been discussing behavioural development of children in different forms. We as teachers or simply adults taking care of children, have come to realize that children behave in ways that puzzle and concern experienced teachers or adults, but which to the less experienced people, their behaviour can be irritating and confusing.

In a child study, cross-sections of adults who had been working with children were asked to list the behaviours of children that trouble them most, two items outnumbered all the

others and these are aggression and disobedience. Other things that they claimed worried them about children again are temper, pestering for attention, lying, stealing, eating problems, lack of concentrated and personal habits. Some of the adults in their responses admitted that they felt guilty when they remember their reactions to some of these behaviours from the children. But at the same time they believed that children should not be allowed to continue to behave as they like, especially when one considers the effect of their behaviour on other children, disturbing the group or exposing themselves to danger. Something has to be done, especially when one remembers the nature of the young children going by all that we have been discussing in their various stages of development.

You will recall that, in our first unit of this course, we started recognizing the nature of the child and showing understanding to the behaviour of children as some of the purposes of child study. (You can go back to read this over again). As adults we need not allow the behaviour of children to trouble us too much, we should also re-examine ourselves where we have failed to help these children out. One of such ways is to teach them self-discipline especially when it comes to emotional matter. You will recall that we say a three year old child can be loving and responsive, but always wanting to have his own way; and that as a child approaches age five, he can be boastful.

Also that a child between the age seven and eleven years can be anxious against ineffective adults. Discipline is therefore a part of the act of education necessary to curb some of the excuses of children's behaviour that may not be socially accepted.

You may then wonder, what is discipline? we believe, the word is a common term to you in your everyday conversation, but since we are now bringing it up as an act of education, we may need to define it and relate it to education, especially as it effects the teaching or education in general of young children.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise I**

1. Mention 7 Characteristics behaviour of children that worries adults. Underline the two most outstanding ones.
2. Children don't just behave badly; it is only natural of them true or false?

#### **3.1.1 What is Discipline?**

To some people, discipline is having everybody conforming to some laid down rules and regulations. But this is more like a military setting where everybody carries out certain duties like morning parade with precision. This is not the type of discipline we talk about in schools. A democratic teacher should not control his children by just dishing out orders indiscriminately and expecting the children to obey them passively without complaints. Some other people believe discipline is being able to live a hard way of life. To people like this one is expected to live with the barest minimum essentials of life, no luxury of any kind.

To such people, school's midday meal is unnecessary, drama or dancing in schools is a waste of time, and even the use of modern gadgets to teach and learn is indulgence. To this group of people children will learn no matter the condition of the classroom.

Discipline in school is more than all these things. It is more than having a quiet and still class, or mere maintenance of law and order in the classrooms. It is even more than being able to deal with offenders or knowing when to introduce occasional punishment and praises.

Discipline involves the application of those influences which secure or at least try to secure proper conduct of children in schools. Classroom disciplines is the training giving to children so as to make them self - restraint, orderly, of good-conduct, co-operative and building up the habit of wanting to get the best out of themselves. Discipline involves intellectual and moral education and not giving out order and instruction.

### 3.1.2 The Value of Discipline for the Child

Discipline should be seen as a means to an end and not as an end itself. It is valuable in:

Making it possible to every child in a classroom to work free from inter-eruption and disturbance i.e. having the right opportunity for work. Helping the child to learn self-control. The best form of discipline is to make the child develop a life style of self-discipline and patriotism. To gradually bring the child to appreciate, to wish to participate in and support the government. In this way, the child will develop to respect the rights of others, and praise the efforts of other people.

The best form of discipline is self-discipline and sense of patriotism but we should instill discipline, and avoid over pampered of the children. Children's power of self-control should be developed, and they should be trained to use their self-control. Children should be trusted to some extent and they should be, made to feel authority and not only seeing authority.

### 3.1.3 How to Impose Discipline

Teachers world have done so much if they can teach pupils to take over the responsibility for their own learning and to carry out their responsibilities. This can be done in the following ways:

- Acquaint children with behaviours that is acceptable to the group or society in general, also point out to them behaviours that are not acceptable (remember that this is major discussion in Social development in Unit 7). In this way you will help the children to establish a code of conduct for themselves.
- In a slow manner, help the children to improve on their standards of code of conduct. You do this by making them see the advantage of setting high standards for themselves and the disadvantage of setting low standards. You help to clarify value through questioning and discussions.
- Sometimes you may need to enforce rules as a tool for self-discipline. By enforcing some rules, it becomes a desirable behavioral habit.

### Self-Assessment Exercise 2

1. Give 2 major values of discipline.
2. Outline the ways you will adopt to maintain discipline in a group of children.

## **3.2 Factors Influencing Discipline**

Maintaining discipline as it has been so described may not be easy. Some factors have been recognized to be influential in discipline. I believe it is proper to state these factors with brief description so that this will give you more understanding of the children's behaviour and will also help you to appreciate the influence of these factors on discipline.

### **The school as a society**

The school is like a society in itself. The children, the students in the school are susceptible to the force of the public opinion, and they have to go by the tone of the school. The school as a society in itself is a powerful influence on the children's character formation. The tone of each school is likely to be different. The time for break time for special prayer etc. differ from school to school, and all these influence the self-discipline of the children.

In each school however, the children are made to feel that they are living in a society where hard work, beautiful things, moral values, muscular skill and fair plays are valued. These are not only valued by the teachers but by the school as a whole. Mind you children should also be made to feel as part of the whole school.

### **Ideal or model presentation**

This is from what the children are made to study. If stories of outstanding people are told to the children's during some subject lessons, they develop interest and appreciate the abilities, work and lives of these outstanding people. The child will be filled with the desire to follow in the steps of those masters they have chosen as ideals or models and this thus mould the child's character. It is therefore advisable to tell young children stories of heroes which encourage durable qualities in them.

### **Interesting work or motivation**

Teachers should make the children to realize the value of all school work. This is to help the children develop their inner satisfaction which makes them to want to do more of the work. Since they can feel and see the worth of the school work, they want to do more, such that there will be no room for mis behaviour. The interest developed becomes a disciplinary power.

### **Keeping all children busy**

As you would have learnt, children can be restless. When planning the days work, the teacher should have at the back of his mind these children who will finish so quickly and thus be playing or misbehaving.

The teacher should make provision for extra educative work not just anything to keep such children busy.

### **Combining firmness with kindness**

The future welfare of the children must be considered. Whenever a child does something bad, he should be made to realize it. This should not be by scolding, beating or fussing all the time, else it will be taking as saying of weakness on the part of the teacher or parent. The

children should be convinced that whatever the teacher/parent says, he means it and that he says the most serious thing in a gentle and kind way.

### **Consistency justice**

A teacher must be consistent and impartial with his requirement. It is not good to enforce a regulation on a day and fail to do so the following day. If a child forgets to bring his literature book to school in a day, and he is sent out to go back home to get it, another child who does the same thing at another time should not be pardoned, the teacher should explain the situation to the class.

All cases of mis-behaviour should also be examined before meting out punishment. Whenever a punishment is to be given, the children should be counseled to know why they are being punished consider the example given below:

Here is a conversation between a teacher and two boys who stayed away from school the previous day:

**Teacher:** I am glad to see you back. I missed you yesterday, and I was a bit uncomfortable, too because I would not want any bad thing to happen to you. You are my friends. Tell me, sincerely as your friend, what really kept you away from school.

**Pupils:** We are sorry, sir, but we escorted our friend who was going to Lagos to the railway station. The train was late to arrive. We knew we were already late for school, so we decided to stay out for the day.

**Teacher:** I am happy it was nothing bad like accident or sudden illness that stopped you from school yesterday. But do you think your reason is a good one? Or why did you not send a message to me saying you would be late?

**Pupils:** We are sorry, sir.

**Teacher:** Do you feel you are wrong or right?

**Pupils:** We are wrong sir.

**Teacher:** Now that you know you are wrong to have stayed out of school, I will give you slight punishment so that when you remember the punishment you will not repeat such a thing.

**Pupils:** We agree, sir. .!

No harm is done because the boys were made to realize why they were punished. Cruel and unusual punishment should not be used, and children be given opportunity to explain the reason for their bad behaviour before punishment.

### **Dealing personally with offender**

It is not good punishing a whole class for the offence of a person or a set of students. To those who do not carry out the offence, it is an act of injustice, and the children will not be happy about this. Each child should be made to be answerable to his fault.



However there may be cases of difficulty in discovering the particular offenders, the teacher can then met out a mild punishment on the whole class. It should be realized that this kind of punishment is not just for the offence but for the incapability of the entire class to identify the actual offender (s). This type of punishment should be avoided as much as possible.

There shouldn't be too many school rules and regulations, because the tendencies to forget them are high and as such children can easily go against them. The school should only introduce rules and regulations that are very necessary probably some children are fond of doing certain wrong things which then suggest coming out with a militant rule against it. Rules should be clear and definite; the children may even on their own suggest what should be a rule.

### **Bad home training and upbringing**

A child usually spends more time at home than in school. If the type of home training or upbringing a child receives at home is bad and in contrary to the one in school; the child can be a disciplinary problem in the school. For example a child who is used to lying at home without anybody scolding him for it, may not see anything bad in lying when he gets to school. Or a child, whose parents are always quarrelling and fighting, may become aggressive in school, always picking up quarrelling or fighting his mates. In cases like this, the teacher has to organize a meeting of the parent(s) of such child with the school authority or the teacher himself. They should talk out away of helping such child.

The absence of the points raised above, except for the last one, will create obstacle to discipline in schools, so as teachers, we should allow these to guide us. This is necessary so that the children in our care can develop to becoming, responsible and disciplined citizens in future.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise 3**

List the factors that can influence discipline in children. **3.3 Types of Discipline**

Teachers are human beings, with normal human characters, including personality and individual differences. We are all different in the way we perceive things and extent to which we act on matters can be very different class control and subsequently class discipline styles can be different. Specialists in Educational management and psychology have been able to identify four categories of teachers in this regard. We believe it will be proper to let you know this, so that you will know where you belong and see how you can improve upon yourself.

We have:

- The permissive or take it easy teacher
- The authoritarian teacher
- The benevolent teacher
- The democratic teacher.

These categories also hold the same respective style of discipline; so we have

### **Permissive discipline**

This is the type of situation where the teacher believes that children should be allowed to do or say what they like. The teacher does not disturb the children in their play or work. He does not believe in getting up any standard or form of behaviours acceptable. Neither discourage nor encourage the children to keep to certain standards. The effect of this is that:

- The assertive and stronger children will be bullying the weaker ones.
- The stronger ones want the weaker to be submissive; in this way the weaker ones will come to hate the school system.
- There will be no law and order in such classrooms, and there will be unhealthy rivalry among the children.
- Those children that are reserved, i.e. introvert, will be withdrawing from group work, such children will be passive in class activities
- The children will hardly engage in team work since everybody does what he likes.
- When an offence is committed by the class, the children as a whole will only be looking for escape goats.
- The children's morale will be low.

### **Authoritarian discipline**

This is like the extreme opposite of the permissive type. The teacher exercises excessive control on the children, not allowing them to do anything on their own. The teacher does not believe in the children giving any suggestion when it comes to classroom matters. He insists on absolute submission by the children. The effect of this is that

The children passively submit to the teachers, order, and they grow to hate the teacher for this. Children can be irritable and unwilling to co-operate with the teacher. The children will engage in back-sitting, losing concentration in class and if possible avoid coming to the class. The over dependence of the children on the teacher will not encourage creativity and there will be lack of initiative from the children.

The active children find it even more uncomfortable and unpleasant staying in such classroom than the passive children. The children in a class of this type, lack self-discipline, love and affection, these children may grow to have this type of attitude to life even in future. The classroom situation in a class of this type is usually under check and there is always tension.

### **Benevolent autocratic discipline**

The teacher or adult in this case is a kind absolute ruler. He enforces his authority but in a kind and cheerful manner. He can be described as a firm and kind teacher.

## **Democratic discipline**

This is in between the two extremes of permissive and authoritarian discipline styles. The teacher imposes minimal, defined degrees of control and standard. He gives room for social, personal, moral and emotional development. The teacher is considerate and allows the inputs of the children in the government of the class. He does not allow sarcasm, ridicule and would not punish children unduly and unnecessarily. The teacher gives guidance and assistance to children when necessary. He allows children to choose the members of their team whenever there are going to be team work. In a classroom of this type, there will be humor and many, interesting situation will be going on in the class and interaction is cordial and control is child- centered. The effects of this are the children are less dependent on the teacher; they carry out their activities with the same zeal, with or without the presence of the teacher. The children grow to like the teacher, because he is sympathetic and interested in their well-being.

- The children are friendly and can talk freely about their work.
- The children will have self-confidence in themselves and they also develop self-discipline love and affection
- The children accept and assume responsibility willingly whenever necessary, they also praise one another for their efforts.
- There will be fewer disciplinary problems
- Children enjoy and understand their lessons.
- The morale of the children in general is high.
- The children are active; there is room for initiative and creative activities.
- The children in such class could rate high in academics and social learning achievement.

## **Self-Assessment Exercise 4**

Permissive discipline is not good, and neither is Authoritarian discipline, Discuss?

### **3.4 Punishment**

This is the act of making somebody to suffer for an offence. Punishment refers to what somebody is asked to do as a sign of social disapproval of an undesirable behaviour. Social disapproval in the sense that the behaviour is not according to the standards or norms of the society that the offender belongs to. Remember that we have described a school as asocial setting. A behaviour may be an offence in one school, and yet may not be an offence in another school, which is a different society.

Punishment is supposed to result in personal discomfort or pain. It is believed that before we conclude our discussion on discipline, we shall mention briefly, what we mean by punishment, since punishment always goes together with discipline.

Punishment is a reward with a negative value. It is a device through which teachers resort to maintain discipline in class. We should however note that, punishment should solely be given as a result of a definite violation of agreed rules and regulations, and should always be administered (given) by someone in authority.

## **Self-Assessment Exercise 5**

What is Punishment?

### **4.0 Conclusion**

Discipline is not being still or quiet in class. It is not having passive children who are very obedient to teachers and school rules and regulation. And it is not having a teacher who knows how to use the cane well. Discipline is having each student (child) in a classroom being self-disciplined and engaging in purposefully activity in an orderly manner without any disturbance. Every child being of good conduct.

You have been told of the negative effects on children when a teacher adopts a permissive or authoritarian disciplinary approach in dealing with his/her student. In order to maintain good class discipline a teacher must ensure that his tone of leadership style is clear and he must also be democratic in his dealings with children. In this way the teacher will be producing a generation of children who can think for themselves and impose self-discipline upon themselves later on in life.

### **5.0 Summary**

Discipline we are told is a developmental process, the child need to be trained to be self-disciplined Discipline involves applying all possible influences to make a child secure proper conduct in schools. You also learnt about the values of and factors affecting discipline. You were also given some tips on how to impose discipline in Young children.

The different terms of disciplinary styles were also highlighted. You are able to appreciate that whatever disciplinary style adopted will always have some effects on the children. Those effects were stated for the respective disciplinary styles. we believe you would have agreed with us that the best approach is the democratic disciplinary style, though we are aware that we all have our own natural individual differences. In the next unit, we shall discuss the task of the teacher. Teacher-child relationship and how the teacher can organize and manage teaching learning materials shall be discussed.

### **6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise**

1. What is discipline?
2. What purposes does discipline serve in school?
3. Punishment is with a negative value:
4. What are the possible reasons for children's problematic behaviour
5. The different disciplinary styles are

6. In your own opinion which of the disciplinary styles is the best?
7. Give reasons. It is important to use a tone of voice that is yet ---- when disciplining the child.
8. Discipline is necessary for the ..... of the child. It teaches the child to behave in a way

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## Unit 4 The Task of A Teacher

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### 1.0 Introduction

In the last unit we focused on discipline as a part of educational act. In the unit, we described what is meant by Discipline and stated the value of discipline in a young child.

There are discussions on how to impose discipline on children. Factors that can influence discipline and types of disciplinary styles were considered. Discipline was also related to punishment. It was stressed that the best way to make a child develop well emotionally, socially and intellectually is to train the child to be self-disciplined.

All the while we have been describing the nature of the development process of the young child. The children will be brought to us as teacher to supplement the training they receive at home, even in most cases or in some cases, the parents and even the society at large expect so much from the teachers. They want to observe considerable changes in the behaviour of a child who is already attending or has attended a pre-primary or primary school.

Teaching and learning are two processes that always, go together. The two process can be very complicated yet simple. The children that we are going to teach and help to grow according to the dictates of the society are also members of the larger society. They are under the influence of the home, the school and the community. It is therefore the teacher's task to put all these into consideration while organizing the processes involved in teaching and learning.

### 2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the four main components of the teacher's task
- appreciate the nature of the young child
- list those factor's that can influence the behaviour of the child
- define Teaching
- define Learning
- relate teaching to learning
- mention the attributes that make up the individuality of a child
- state the programmesteachers can use to direct learning
- give examples of school curricular that group method will be suitable for the task of a teacher.

## 3.0 Main Content

### 3.1 The Task of a Teacher

Living and working with children can be very tasking, and for many of their actions we don't always think before reacting, our actions at times, can be spontaneous, i.e. without thinking. Our fundamental attitude to children is important so as to avoid dangerous mistakes. As we have been discussing in the past sixteen units, children's behaviour is particular and characteristic, our knowledge of their various developmental processes gives us insight to the behaviour and full understanding of their nature.

If we must contribute to the children's holistic development, then we must be prepared to face the task with a basic attitude of love and honesty.

The task of the teacher, to be prepared for, may not be easy to put into specific areas because the division will only be artificial, teachers task are enormous and countless.

However, on close examination of these tasks, we can identify four main components namely:

- Teaching and learning -having a firm grasp of the general principles of successful teaching and learning.
- Organization and management: The ability to organize and manage the teaching and learning environment
- Home, school and community: being able to appreciate the educational implication of cordial relationship between school, the home background of children and the neighborhood in which they live in
- Teacher as learner: being prepares to admit self as undergoing lifelong learning.

Before we take each of these components, one after the other for some brief explanation, let's consider the Young Child, as an individual, after all without the children there is no school

### 3.2 The Young Child

The young child is still developing, his feelings are strong but he is still immature. Most of a child's behaviour is determined by the stage which the child is, in his developmental process. (Recall the various stages we discussed in each of the aspects of child development (unit 5-6). Along with this stage, other influence of the child's behaviour is his temperament, his abilities, his health, his family (parent and other sibilings-sisters and brothers), his immediate feeling and his history .The behaviour may be normal for his stage of development and it may be that the behaviour is the type that shows that the child needs help.

As adult we try to do something positive if the child is found to need help. In all cases the child needs our constant love and support. We should note that play is an essential part of children (see unit 12). They are energetic and full of vitality. We should try to avoid bottle neck arrangement of furniture and big equipment so that we always provide bigger passage

for running, for pushing and pulling playing materials and riding of wheeled toys. Those things that you think are materials for learning, may turn out to be materials for play to children, but mind you they do their learning through play as well. In this regard, those things must not be out of reach of the children except those that may be injurious to them.

A child usually has a healthy sequence of play, they start with rigorous play and later quieter play. There should be opportunities for both type of plays, so that each child can work in his own pace. When you want children to change the activities they are doing, they must not have to wait for too long or too short a time for instance changing from period of toileting, to period of storytelling, or time for food. And there should be warning before the change. If we take time to study our children we will be able to present them from behaving badly because we would have been able to recognize signs of tension when it is building up in them and as such, skillfully direct their attention to more interesting things. Children like an act physically, they are born with natural ability to combine very complicated movements.

We still need to help them in this regard. They are not just to the exercise, we must teach them how to co-ordinate their muscular movement properly. Children can develop 'bad habits' in walking, running, throwing and even sitting, we shouldn't think it is only in emotional or social matter that they develop bad habit.

Emotionally, children don't have a standard pattern of development. A child of about six years old may be so noisy and demanding and at seven he may become quiet, rather shy and sad at times. By the time he becomes eight, he may become so active again, cheerful and lively. You wonder as he becomes nine or ten years he may be withdrawing again. The emotional pattern, is full of ups and downs parents and teachers must therefore be prepared for this and be ready to show understanding. You will also notice that towards the end of childhood year's i.e. from age eleven, girls become more interested in toys, they begin to worry about their appearance, figure and complexion, this is closely related to their physical development, they are becoming young women. The boys are not so interested in girls at this age; they do this later about two to three years after. The boys will rather avoid the girls in their plays and games.

The intellectual development of the child too is also something to consider. (see unit 9).

Now let's take each of the components one after the other. But still attempt this exercise below before you continue.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise I**

1. Give six factors that can influence child's behaviour.
2. The classroom should be spacious give major reasons for this.

### **3.3 Teaching and Learning**

Teaching and Learning are two different but closely related processes. Children can learn without a teacher. This is because children learn many things when the teachers is not teaching. However, learning is a product of teaching. Curzon (1991) defines teaching as system of activities intended to induce learning, comprising the deliberate and methodical creation and control of conditions necessary for learning to take place. Learning, on the



other hand, according to Smith (1988) is what occurs when a person makes sense out of what he encounters and experiences in interaction with self, other and the environment.

To teach is to help someone acquire skill, attitude, knowledge, appreciating information or ideas; it includes provision of conditions that can promote the building of attitudes, skill development and other aspects of learning. Unless learning takes place as a result of some efforts, we cannot conclude that teaching has taken place. In the teaching- learning process, both the teacher and learner must be active.

Using the words of Clark and Starr "The mediocre teacher tells, the good teacher explains, the superior teacher demonstrates, the great teacher inspires." Many people are able to climb the ladder of success because of the inspiration of their great teachers. For learning to take place there must be observable changes in the behaviour of the learner. Learning is not mere memorization or verbalization because such behaviour is not permanent. To promote effective learning, teachers should keep the atmosphere in the class informal but polite.

Learning is determined by five factors, namely the curriculum, instructional materials, learning time, teaching time and the learners (child's) learning ability). The first four being school inputs and process and it is the duty of the teacher and school authority to see to their effectiveness.

It is true that children love stories, legend, fiction but these are fantasy and imagination needed to stir creativity in them. However, this must not be confused with scientific truth. The teacher simply needs to know which materials and books are appropriate to certain subject matter that is relevant to the child.

To develop the desired skills, interest and attitude in the children, the teacher should adopt highly motivational teaching strategies by which lessons are presented in such a way that children are carried along to find answers to some questions through their activities.

For effective teaching and learning the teacher must realize that both the teacher and the learner must be active. The following are processes or acts that will ensure the effective mutual teaching and learning in early child education:

- Teacher- child relationships
- Teacher -directed learning
- The Independent learner
- The school climate
- Discipline
- Curriculum
- Evaluation.

We will now go through these factors briefly, but before then check your progress with the next exercise.

## Self-Assessment Exercise 2

1. What is (a) Teaching (b) Learning?
2. Learning cannot take place without teaching Yes or No.

### 3.3.1 Teacher - Child Relationship

Can you recollect some of our discussion on personality development and acquisition of identity? To raise the self-esteem of a young child the teacher should accept the child as he is, with his differences and uniqueness, his individual background and personal capacities. Children should not be allowed to see themselves as unsuccessful, the teacher should see to it by helping the child in terms of background experience, willingness to accept teaching, outside school opportunities, emotional states, social development and states of learning should be considered.

We all know that it is only the child that is motivated through intellectually stimulating and emotional content (experience) will most likely make progress. The teacher within himself /herself should try to attain a peaceful state of mind i.e. should be emotionally balanced. This will promote confidence, efficiency and enjoyment in his job. The teacher should decenter from unnecessary anxiety and should not expect too much from the child. A child's expectation from the teacher is determined by the general experience the child had got about adult. The child expects assurance of security and friendly atmosphere to which he, the child, responds to with affection and trust. Older children expect the teacher to help them develop their intellectual and other abilities, expect the teacher to teach them everything they need to know. If the child is not getting what he expects from the teacher, he becomes unsure of the importance of school and develops indifference (I don't care attitude) to learning.

Normally young children are eager to learn, they have the zeal for investigation and the desire to acquire the skills adults have. It is therefore the primary task of early childhood educators to ensure that this attitude does not grow less in the child. Teaching young children demands special qualities of sensitivity, patience, vision and respect for minds in the making. It is really a difficult task, but the teacher can make it easy by creating time to cultivate rapport (maintaining peaceful relationship) with each child; in this way he gets to know them better on an individual basis.

## Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Mention those attitudes that make up individuality in children.

### 3.3.2 Teacher - Directed Learning

From all that we have been saying, we would have realized that teaching, for learning is not an easy task, is quite complicated. Many activities go into it. Teachers can make their work easy by planning and organizing teaching -learning experiences well. The teacher in this case, assumes the role of director of learning. The teacher as the director introduces a combination of programmes such as:

- Individual teaching and learning.

- Group teaching and learning.
- Class teaching and learning.

### 3.3.2.1 Individual Teaching and Learning

As concluded in Teacher - Child relationship, the teacher gets to know the children on an individual basis. The teachers learn about individual interests and talents. This is to be observed when doing things of their personal choices. The teacher notes them as the starting points for further development. Teacher allocates specific time for individual contact time to share in the children's self-chosen activities, play etc. for normal development. The teacher must be careful the way he handles the gifted child and the slow learner. The very capable children should not be held back, they must be helped to go ahead using their full powers, while the teacher plan his/her time to attend to those who will fail if they don't get much of the teachers assistance. The creation of individual contact-time in the classroom setting is very necessary in subjects like language, mathematics and creative arts.

The individual teaching -learning approach helps to bring out the events of individuality in children. A child may be slow in learning language and yet exhibits easy understanding of science. With provision of teaching equipment (material), and freedom for children to use them, an unexpected diversity of strengths and weakness emerges.

### 3.3.2.2 Group Teaching and Learning

Sometimes it may be economical to give teaching in groups and later follow it up with individual task-assignment. The nature of the group varies according to the teaching task. Group teaching can be effective with small numbers of children who are approximately in the same learning stage. They should not be more than four or six, chronological age of the children is immaterial, background experience should be the major criteria for grouping. Group teaching usually covers matters as:

- Specific instruction in number and mathematical processes
- Creative writing
- Handwriting
- Craft processes
- Reading teaching
- Investigation (in science)
- The introduction of new apparatus, materials or games.
- The use of dictionaries, encyclopedias, maps and reference books.

### 3.3.2.3 Class Teaching and Learning

For pre-primary school children, the "together times" as classroom teaching is sometimes called strengthening a feeling of security in the unity of the basic group they belong to in school, the child also feels that he can look for his special needs away from home. For the primary school child, he may grow interest in a special teacher and carry feeling from classroom teaching to the time of senior secondary school and later. The period of classroom teaching and learning, however short, gives a sense of order and control to the children, it also foster satisfaction in them. Three different situations can be identified in classroom teaching and learning process, and these are information, instruction and inspiration.

#### Self-Assessment Exercise 4

Give examples of school curricular activities that we can use group teaching method to teach.

### 3.3.2.4 The Independent Learner

Children should also be allowed to contribute to their own learning by learning independently on their own. They can learn from one another. We should note that it is characteristics of young child to be curious and be interested in his surroundings. They learn best when active and can be quite engrossed in whatever they are doing when emotionally involved.

### 3.3.3 The School Climate

Children need practice in social activities and be trained to live and cooperate with others. They need to cultivate good community attitudes, respect for others and their work, giving mutual aid and concern for another. They require a peaceful environment (school climate) where they can have exchange of ideas. There should be some use of comparative and co-operative approaches to arouse the interest of the children in some school or classroom activities, Training in healthy competition is also required for a better quality of life in future, it really develops the child socially.

### 3.3.4 Discipline

As earlier said in the unit before this one self-discipline is the best form of discipline .Discipline also implies being orderly. The teacher should ensure that the children in his/her class are self-disciplined and orderly (Go through unit 16 again).

#### Self-Assessment Exercise 5

How can the school climate contribute to teaching and learning?

### 3.3.5 Curriculum

The learning of experience (curriculum) we expose the children to must be carefully selected. Their curriculum must be relevant too the respective stages in the child's

development. See unit 15, school readiness II, on curriculum relevant for school readiness for the different categories of children.

### 3.3.6 Evaluation

This is a process of checking whether or not the desired objective in any endeavour is achieved or not. The teacher does this by giving tests and examination. In this programme, you will still have a full course on measurement and evaluation. Teachers should however try as much as possible to relate the behavioural objectives stated while planning the lesson to the question(s) to be asked during student assignment. The teacher uses test to find out why a child is not leaning properly and the results of test can also be used to motivate children to work harder.

## 4.0 Conclusion

The task of a teacher in child development is really a very demanding one. The various responsibilities of the teacher may not be easy to classify but on close examination, four main components can be identified. These are the teaching and learning per se, this requires that the teacher has a firm grip, of the general principles, for successful teaching and learning. Secondly, there must be Organization and Management of teaching learning environment/facilities. The third is Home, School and Community; the teacher needs to forge a cordial relationship between the three. Lastly the teacher need to consider himself/herself as a learner and be prepared to accept that he/she is undergoing a life-long learning.

## 5.0 Summary

In this unit we have focused on the teacher and not the child (student or pupil), though most of the discussion still center on the child. The nature of the young child in general is revisited so that the teacher will be able to accept the task before him/her with love and understanding. The major tasks of the teacher were divided into four components. In this unit only one was fully elaborated upon, and that is teaching and learning, which in fact, is the most vital of the four components.

In the next unit the other aspects of the teacher's task will be given more attention. These are organization and management; home, school and community; and Teacher as a learner.

## 6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Teachers must be prepared to face the task of contributing to
2. child's development with a basic attitude of and
3. Give 5 factors that can influence the behaviour of children in the classroom.
4. Naturally young children are eager -- ---, they have the zeal- - --and the desire -- --- the skills adults have.
5. Teaching young children can be a complex thing, but because of their nature this can be made simple what particular nature of the children is being referred to?

6. What is the importance of classroom teaching and learning to a young child.
7. Give 3 main reasons why we give test to children.

## 7.0 References/Further Reading

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